



Department of Justice

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**FRISCO, TEXAS, MAN SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON,
WITHOUT PAROLE, ON CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CONVICTION**

LUBBOCK, Tx. — Joshua Heath Zuniga, of Frisco, Texas, was sentenced today in federal court in Lubbock, Texas, by U.S. District Judge Sam R. Cummings, to 120 months in prison followed by a lifetime of supervised release, announced U.S. Attorney Richard B. Roper of the Northern District of Texas. Zuniga was also ordered to pay for any costs associated with counseling services for the minor victim. Zuniga, 24, pled guilty in February to one count of possession of child pornography. He has been on bond since he surrendered to federal authorities in June 2006, after learning a federal arrest warrant was issued for him on charges outlined in a criminal complaint. Following the sentencing today, Judge Cummings remanded Zuniga to the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service.

The case is the result of an individual contacting the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in December 2005, after finding evidence of inappropriate communications between her 13- year-old daughter, "Jane Doe," and Zuniga. The individual who reported this activity also advised the FBI that she had just learned that her daughter and Zuniga had been having a sexual relationship and he had caused her to send him sexually explicit images and video of herself via the Internet. At the time of the report, "Jane Doe" was a student at a junior high school in Lubbock.

Zuniga admitted in court documents that beginning in June 2005, he initiated a sexual relationship with "Jane Doe." Beginning in the summer months, and continuing through early December 2005, Zuniga and "Jane Doe" communicated over the Internet, and by telephone. Although the communications often related to general life issues, including assistance with homework, the communications also included sexually explicit conversations. In some of the conversations, Zuniga encouraged "Jane Doe" to take sexually explicit images of herself, and to send them to Zuniga.

In November 2005, Zuniga visited Lubbock from his home, at the time, in the Houston, Texas, area, and during the visit, Zuniga set up a computer and web cam in "Jane Doe's" bedroom. The computer had been given to "Doe" by Zuniga's parents. Upon Zuniga's return to the Houston area, "Doe," at Zuniga's request, used the web cam to record a sexually explicit video in which she danced

nude in her bedroom and then emailed the video to Zuniga. After Zuniga received the sexually explicit video of “Jane Doe,” he copied it from his computer to a flash drive.

In early December 2005, Zuniga became aware that “Jane Doe's” family had learned of the inappropriate relationship as her parents found a copy of the sexually explicit video on her computer. Zuniga deleted the video, as well as other material that would have revealed the relationship between him and “Jane Doe” from his computer.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales launched Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S. Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

U.S. Attorney Roper commended the investigative efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Lubbock Police Department, and the Frisco Police Department. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Steven M. Sucsy, of the Lubbock, Texas, United States Attorney's Office.

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